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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2007

In Today's Papers

All papers report Ambassador Ross Wilson hosted a breakfast meeting Tuesday for visiting US congressman Christopher Shays and Kurdish politicians from different political parties, except the pro-Kurdish DTP.

Liberal Radikal says the meeting with Kurdish politicians outside the DTP has sparked speculation that the US has adopted a new policy with regard to the Kurdish issue.

Radikal reports that DTP deputy Ahmet Turk of the pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party (DTP) harshly criticized the US Embassy in Ankara for failing to invite a representative from his party, calling it an "insult to the Turkish parliament." Radikal reports that Turk emphasized that his party "included 20 lawmakers in the parliament, who are supported by two million voters," criticizing their exclusion from such efforts. Turk added the Kurdish question should be handled in the parliament. Radikal reports Kurdish party KADEP leader Serafettin Elci, who joined the breakfast, said the US Ambassador has invited only "the parties that reject violence," and noted that the position of the DTP in this regard was "not clear." The breakfast meeting, hosted by Ambassador Ross Wilson, was held for Representative Christopher Shays, who wanted to learn about the current situation regarding the Kurdish issue and the PKK ahead of his visit to predominantly Kurdish southeastern Turkey.

Bugun reports DTP deputy Sirri Sakik said "the way to resolve the Kurdish issue is not by creating 'artificial representatives' of the Kurdish people in Turkey. Don't you know that the DTP is the real representative of the Kurds in Turkey? The DTP is not a leper, nor is it illegitimate. This is shameful on the part of the US Embassy.

We are as legitimate as the prime minister is." Meanwhile, Today's Zaman reports that the meeting's focus was not solely the AK Party and its policies, but that participants discussed the expansion of democratic rights and economic initiatives in the southeast.

Editorial Commentary on Shays-Wilson Meet with Kurdish

Parliamentarians

Hasan Celal Guzel commented in the liberal Radikal (11/29): "US Ambassador to Turkey Ross Wilson is very busy. His Excellency, as the envoy of a superpower, is trying to resolve the Kurdish issue. Along with Congressmen Shays and Palorino, assigned to inspect Turkey's Kurdistan, his Excellency hosted a Kurdish summit at the Embassy. First of all, the US Ambassador has no right to host such a meeting since it clearly interferes with Turkey's domestic affairs. Just because the PKK was announced as a joint enemy during PM Erdogan's last visit to Washington, the Ambassador has no right to host a meeting about the 'Kurdish Issue.' I am sure that the Ambassador will defend himself by saying "such meetings were held in the past as well, and this time it was arranged for the sake of visiting Congressmen." Well, in that case, could you answer this question please: if the Turkish Ambassador to US Nabi Sensoy had a similar meeting at the Turkish Embassy in Washington on a sensitive issue for the US, what would your reaction be? Ambassador Wilson went beyond the limit with this meeting and the Foreign Ministry should make the necessary warning."

Mustafa Balbay wrote in the leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet (11/29): "The contents of the meeting Ambassador Wilson hosted the other day with the Kurdish origin parliamentarians, reminds us of the principles US President Woodrow Wilson published in January 1918. Reportedly, Ambassador Wilson discussed the PKK, Iran and Iraq with his guests, who did not include DTP deputies. This meeting shows us that the US is after new approaches in finding a solution to the regional issues and already took DTP out of the equation. Article 12 of the Wilson Principles (WP) says that "sovereignty rights should be given to the Turkish parts of the Ottoman Empire but, independence should be given to the non-Turks." Of course, this was received with great happiness in Istanbul, at that time. The huge similarity in the targets of the WP supporters then and the Greater

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Middle East Project supporters now cannot be ignored. Years ago, President Wilson told the Ottoman Empire that "for your own peace, I'll separate and down size you and I will control your strategic regions." And today, Ambassador Wilson is saying "I'll make your regional plans for your own peace and to eliminate the PKK. You will be a part of my plans." As President Wilson's principles were supported by some so-called intellectuals, Ambassador Wilson's ideas also received some support. Thus history repeats itself: The imperialist countries never change their targets, they only change their methods and tools."

Congressman Shays Visits Southeast Turkey

All media outlets extensively cover US Congressman Christopher Shays' travel to the mainly Kurdish southeast "to see the economic and political developments in the region." Shays met a 70 year old woman whose two sons "died in the mountains" fighting with the PKK, and whose husband is missing. Early Wednesday, Shays went to the towns of Silopi and Cizre in the Sirnak province on the border with Iraq. Mainstream papers and the Islamist-oriented Zaman quote Shays at the Habur border crossing, "Several of my fellow Congressmen and President Bush have concerns over the issue of the PKK; we see the organization as the enemy of Turkey, Iraq and the US. I'm here to see that we're doing all in the fight against terrorism." Radikal reports Shays wants to see "an end to the PKK," and pledged US support to that end. Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak reports Shays said Turkey wants to solve the PKK problem "in a peaceful and diplomatic way." Mainstream dailies Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah and the Islamist-oriented Zaman report Shays suggested "dialogue" as the only solution to the Kurdish problem.

Germany Hands over PKK Member Sought by Turkey

Islamist-oriented Zaman reports on its front page Germany extradited Esref Kizilay to Turkey. Kizilay is a PKK militant sought by Turkey by Interpol Red Notices for killing six Turkish police officers in Adana in 1997. He had fled to Germany in 1998. On Tuesday, a Turkish police team took Kizilay to Diyarbakir for interrogation. Zaman reports that Turkey sees Kizilay's extradition as a major change in the European attitudes against terrorism.

TV Highlights

NTV

Domestic News

- Daniel Savci, an Assyrian priest in Midyat in the southeastern city of Mardin, has been kidnapped by unidentified people. The kidnappers demand a ransom of 300,000 Euro.
- President Abdullah Gul is to travel to Islamabad on December 2-3 as the guest of President Pervez Musharraf to meet with government and opposition leaders for "peace and democracy" in Pakistan. During the visit, Gul will be accompanied by his wife Hayrunnisa Gul, senior officials, business leaders and top media personalities of Turkey.
- The tender for the construction of Turkey's first nuclear power plant is to be announced February 21. Energy Minister Hilmi Guler said Turkey plans to build three plants until 2010 with a total capacity of 5,000 megawatts in which local investors will have 60-percent shares.
- A survey conducted by TESEV foundation for economic and social research shows that more than half of the judges and prosecutors in Turkey see the human rights as "a threat for the security of the state."

International News

- The UN has returned to Iraq -- UN envoy to Iraq Staffan de Mistura and Kurdish regional administration PM Nechirvan Barzani have opened

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Wednesday a UN office in Erbil.

- Iranian President Ahmadinejad said Wednesday that Annapolis conference was "a failure."
- Representatives of six world powers trying to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions will meet in Paris over the weekend.
- Saudi Arabia announced on Wednesday that it had arrested 208 suspected al-Qaeda members who had been planning attacks on oil facilities and assassinations of clerics and security forces across the country.

WILSON